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A Sacred Connection

Spring is a season of renewal—a time when the earth awakens from its winter slumber, bursting forth in vibrant colors and fresh energy. It is nature's way of reminding us that life is a continuous cycle of growth, transformation and connection. As buds blossom and birdsong fills the air, we are invited to embrace the sacred connection that binds us to the world around us.

This connection extends far beyond the physical renewal of the season. It speaks to the intricate web of relationships we share—with nature, with one another and with the deeper essence of life itself. Every living thing exists in harmony, dependent upon and influencing one another in ways both seen and unseen. From the tiniest sprout reaching for the sun to the vast forests that cleanse our air, everything is woven together in a sacred dance of existence.

For many, spring is a time to pause, to breathe deeply and to realign with what truly matters. It is a chance to listen—not just to the songs of the birds or the rustling of leaves but to the whispers of our own hearts. The natural world offers us endless lessons in resilience, patience and balance if only we take the time to observe and appreciate them.

As we welcome the warmth of the sun and the promise of new beginnings, may we also recognize our role in this beautiful interconnectedness. Let us nurture our relationships, tend to the earth with care and embrace the profound energy of renewal that spring provides.

This month, we celebrate the sacred bond that unites us all. Whether through planting a garden, spending time with loved ones or simply standing in awe of nature's beauty, may we honor this connection and carry its lessons forward.

Here's to a season of awakening, of deepening our relationships with ourselves and the world, and of celebrating the sacred connection that makes life so rich and meaningful.

With gratitude

Trina & John

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions are available for $120 (for 12 issues) by emailing the above address.

GREATER ANN ARBOR EDITION

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PRINTED WITH SOY INK

Natural Awakenings is printed on partially recycled and fully recyclable newsprint with black soy ink.

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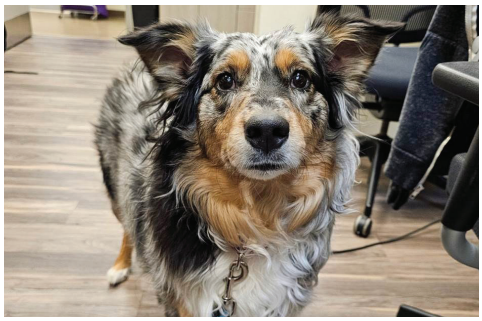
Justice Achieved for Abused Australian Shepherds



Cali

The Humane Society of Huron Valley (HSHV) sees long-awaited justice for two Australian Shepherds rescued from severe abuse in 2022. The resolution of this case highlights the pressing need for stronger legal protections and faster outcomes for animal cruelty victims.

In March 2022, a veterinary clinic alerted authorities after treating an 8-month-old Australian Shepherd puppy for a broken leg and discovering multiple healing fractures inconsistent with the owner's explanation. A witness later confirmed the dog, later named Cali, had suffered repeated physical abuse. HSHV animal cruelty investigators rescued Cali and another Australian Shepherd from the owner's custody, launching a years-long fight for their justice and safety.

On October 29, 2024, the dogs' owner, George Herman, pled guilty to a misdemeanor charge of animal cruelty. He was sentenced to five days in jail and 24 months of probation, during which he is prohibited from having contact with animals. He was also ordered to pay approximately $14,000 in restitution to HSHV for the dogs' medical care.

"This case was heartbreaking, but we are relieved that both dogs are now safe and loved," says Tanya Hilgendorf, HSHV's president and CEO. "We need stronger laws to ensure animals don't spend years in shelters awaiting justice while their abusers receive minimal punishment."

HSHV urges legislative action to prevent prolonged shelter stays for cruelty victims and continues advocating for stronger protections for abused animals.

HSHV is an independent, nonprofit animal welfare organization in Ann Arbor dedicated to protecting and caring for animals. Recognized for its high save rate and best practices, HSHV relies on community support to provide critical services.

Location: 3100 Cherry Hill Rd., Ann Arbor. For more information, call 734-662-5585 or visit HSHV.org. See ad page 25.

Peaceful Dragon School Hosts Pearls of Wisdom Series for Community Well-Being

Peaceful Dragon School of Tai Chi and Chi Kung, led by Master Instructor Wasentha Young, will host Pearls of Wisdom, a transformative monthly series designed to promote emotional, spiritual and collective stability. The first event will be from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on May 5, and will continue on the first Monday of each month through August.

Wasentha Young

Each session starts with Peaceful Dragon Rising Qigong Stretches, a practice designed by Master Young to promote relaxation, energy flow and balance. The series explores various aspects of self-awareness, healing and community engagement, featuring expert guest speakers on diverse topics.

On May 5, Master Wasentha Young will lead Center, Cleanse, Revitalize, guiding participants through practices that cultivate inner balance and renewal. June 2 will feature acupuncturist Abby Humphrey presenting This Energy Body, offering insight into the body's energetic systems. On July 7, Priestess Mara Evenstar will discuss Shadow Work for Liberation, encouraging deep self-reflection and transformation. The series concludes on August 4 with activist Anna Gersh leading Community Activism in 2025, a conversation on engagement and social change.

The donation-driven event welcomes individuals seeking personal growth and collective wisdom. Participants must be able to navigate a flight of stairs, as there is no elevator access. If well attended, the series will continue in the fall with a focus on sound, movement and environmental sustainability.

Location: 1945 Pauline Blvd., Ste. B, Ann Arbor. For more information, call 734-741-0695 or visit PeacefulDragonSchool.com. See ad page 14.

Mental Health Services for Convenient At-Home Assessments

Gita Mahabir-Kohlsmith

Mahabir Wellness offers comprehensive mental health assessments from the comfort of home, providing individuals with an efficient way to gain valuable insights into their well-being. In under 50 minutes, clients receive a complete and actionable report that can be shared with healthcare providers or used to begin a proactive treatment plan with Mahabir Wellness.

This expansion aims to bridge the gap between mental health concerns and accessible care, ensuring individuals receive timely assessments without the need for in-person visits. Confidential and HIPAA-compliant, these assessments cover a wide range of conditions, including ADHD, OCD, anorexia, insomnia, suicidal ideation, depression, sleep disorders, bipolar disorder, personality disorders, substance and alcohol abuse, PTSD, narcissistic tendencies, restless leg syndrome and more.

Each assessment generates a detailed healthcare document that can be utilized for therapy, primary care consultations, or specialist referrals. Mahabir Wellness remains committed to offering affordable and effective mental health solutions, reinforcing the importance of early intervention and personalized treatment strategies.

Location: 1640 Haslett Rd., Ste. 100, Haslett. For more information or to make an appointment, call 517-898-8541 or visit Mahabir Wellness.com.

Ann Arbor Hosts Earth Day Events for Community Engagement

Ann Arbor's commitment to sustainability and environmental awareness takes center stage this month as the community celebrates Earth Day 2025 with two events focused on education, restoration and eco-conscious living. Residents, families and students are invited to participate in activities that highlight the importance of protecting natural spaces and fostering a greener future.

Earth Day: Leslie Science & Nature Center

The signature Earth Day Festival returns to the Leslie Science & Nature Center from 1 to 4:30 p.m. on April 27. This free, family-friendly event features interactive displays, live entertainment and educational exhibits from over 30 local environmental organizations. Guests can explore topics ranging from clean energy and sustainable agriculture to water conservation and eco-transportation. A colorful All-Species Parade begins at 2 p.m., encouraging attendees of all ages to dress in animal-inspired or nature-themed costumes in celebration of biodiversity and a healthy planet. The festival is designed as a zero-waste event, with clearly marked compost, recycling and landfill bins throughout the grounds.

Earlier in the week, Adamah on Campus at the University of Michigan hosts a hands-on Natural Habitat Restoration event from 4 to 6 p.m., on April 22. This volunteer opportunity offers students, young adults and community members a chance to engage directly with the land and learn restoration techniques that support local ecosystems. The event location will be shared upon registration.

Locations and event details: Earth Day Festival returns to the Leslie Science & Nature Center, 1831 Traver Rd., Ann Arbor. For more information, call 734-997-1553 or visit DiscoverScienceAndNature.org. University of Michigan Natural Habitat Restoration, Ann Arbor area location, to be provided upon registration. For more information, call 646-248-5981 or visit Adamah.org.

Community Foraging Events Grow in Popularity Across Greater Ann Arbor

Greater Ann Arbor residents seeking a deeper connection with nature are turning to foraging, guided by organizations dedicated to traditional skills and sustainable living. Will Forage for Food, a prominent foraging and homesteading community, offers plant walks, workshops and skills camps for beginners and seasoned foragers alike. With both in-person and online offerings, the group fosters a sense of community and ecological mindfulness.

This spring, interest continues to bloom. No.MI Hunt|Gather will hold a wild edibles foraging class on April 19 in Ann Arbor, drawing participants from across southeast Michigan. Meanwhile, the Wild Ones Ann Arbor Chapter educates locals about native flora through volunteering opportunities at the Matthaei Botanical Gardens & Nichols Arboretum.

Local trails and parks offer additional opportunities to safely forage, though enthusiasts are encouraged to observe ethical harvesting practices and local regulations. For those eager to explore further, Will Forage for Food hosts immersive skills camps in the Irish Hills region, featuring hands-on learning on private, scenic waterfront land.

Social media has also become a foraging ally. Will Forage for Food actively shares insights and event updates via Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube, helping newcomers connect with resources and experts in the field.

Locations and details: Will Forage for Food, 1805 Cornell Rd., Ypsilanti. For more information, call 734-545-9735 or visit WillForageForFood.com. Matthaei Botanical Gardens & Nichols Arboretum, 1800 N. Dixboro Rd., Ann Arbor. For more information, call 734-647-7600 or visit Mbgna.Umich.edu. No.MI Hunt|Gather, 500 E. Washington St., Ann Arbor. For more information, call 734-994-2780 or visit Meetup.com/HuntGather.

Reconnect with the Earth for Better Health

Modern life often disconnects people from the natural rhythms of the Earth, but science shows that reconnecting can improve overall well-being. Grounding, or walking barefoot on natural surfaces, allows the body to absorb the Earth's natural electromagnetic charge, which has been found to reduce inflammation, balance cortisol and improve sleep. Sunlight exposure plays an equally vital role, helping regulate circadian rhythms, support vitamin D production and enhance mitochondrial function—key factors in mood, energy and longevity.

Light therapy, including infrared and red light therapy, mimics these natural benefits by aiding cellular repair, reducing stress and relieving pain. Taking simple steps, such as stepping outside for morning sunlight, walking barefoot on grass or sand, incorporating red light therapy or spending time near water, can help restore the body's natural balance and improve mental clarity.

Nature offers a powerful source of healing. By tuning into its frequencies, individuals can enhance their physical and emotional well-being.

Solara Wellness has been proudly serving Michigan with health services, coaching and education since 2013. Their goal is to help clients elevate their mind and body into a healthier state through holistic, integrative modalities including acupuncture, massage therapy, naturopathic medicine, nutritional coaching, light therapy, herbs and supplements. Location: 644 Migaldi Ln., Ste. 300, Lansing. For more information, call 517-388-1507 or visit SolaraWellness.net.

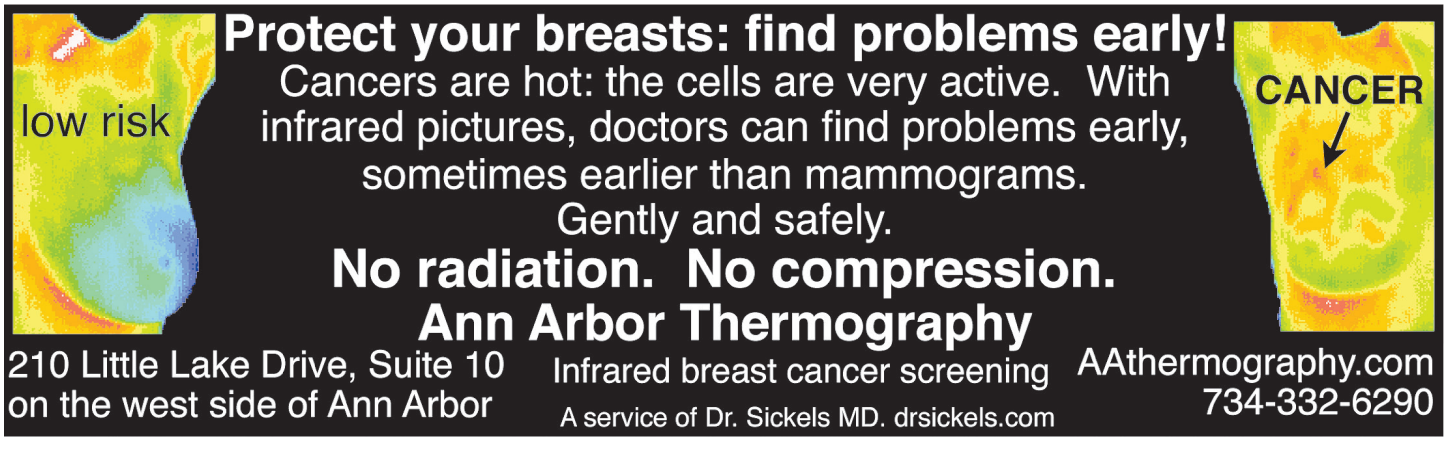
Federal Ban of Toxic Food Dye

In January, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) banned the use of Red No. 3 in food and ingested drugs. The synthetic dye has been primarily used to produce a bright, cherry color in candy, cakes, cookies, frozen desserts and certain pharmaceuticals. The ruling was prompted by a 2022 petition by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, which demonstrated that the coloring agent caused cancer in male rats exposed to high levels. Manufacturers must stop using the dye in foods by January 2027 and in ingestible drugs by January 2028.

Potential New Benefit of Eating Fiber

An observational study published in *Nature Microbiology* found that people with high levels of the beneficial *Faecalibacterium* bacteria were more likely to also have low levels of potentially fatal bacteria, such as *E. coli*. The researchers analyzed gut microbiome samples from more than 12,000 people in 45 countries.

The samples with high levels of *Faecalibacterium* also had high levels of beneficial short-chain fatty acids, a byproduct from the breakdown of fiber. These findings suggest that eating high-fiber foods such as vegetables, beans and grains might help protect against harmful bacteria. Additional research is needed to test whether fiber prevents the incidence of infections over a longer time span.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Recovering From a Bad Night's Sleep

Creatine is a compound made by the body that is found in the muscles and brain. People may take it in supplement form to help build muscle and lower injury risk. A small, controlled study published in the journal *Scientific Reports* evaluated the use of creatine to clear the mental fog that may result from a bad night's sleep. Fifteen healthy young adults stayed in a laboratory for two nights, five days apart, during which they were kept awake all night.

One night, they received a single dose of creatine, and the other, they were given a placebo. Cognitive tests were conducted before they took the creatine or placebo, and at three other times during the night. The researchers found that a single, high dose of creatine partially reversed some of the cognitive impacts of sleep deprivation. Further research is needed to determine appropriate doses for maximum effect.

Rating the Level of Processing in Foods

While highly processed foods have been associated with an unhealthy diet, information about the degree of processing has been limited. GroceryDB, a comprehensive database of more than 50,000 food products sold by Walmart, Target and Whole Foods, is the first systematic attempt to quantify food processing.

With the help of a user-friendly interface called TrueFood *(True Food.tech)*, GroceryDB enables consumers to view the level of processing for specific foods, based on a scoring system where 0.0 to 0.2 represents minimally processed items and 0.7 to 1.0 are considered ultra-processed.

The GroceryDB system uses artificial intelligence to examine each product's ingredient complexity and interactions; presence and quantity of industrial additives; nutritional composition and density; processing methods and techniques; presence of artificial preservatives and enhancers; chemical modifications to the original ingredients; added sugars and their forms; industrial protein sources and modifications; and synthetic micronutrients and fortification.

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Spiritual Healing

Creates Positive Connections

Spiritual healing offers a profound way to create positive relationships and transform energy between individuals. By engaging in a simple yet powerful practice inspired by the ancient Hawaiian Ho'oponopono Prayer, individuals can clear karmic ties, promote emotional healing and foster goodwill in relationships.

The practice involves directing positive intentions toward another person. Think of the person, and while thinking of them, express aloud or silently, "I'm sorry. Please forgive me. Thank you. I love you. I forgive you." These words, when spoken with sincerity, initiate a process of karmic clearing. Many who engage in this spiritual exercise report experiencing immediate shifts in energy, greater inner peace and improved relationships.

This technique is especially valuable when addressing unresolved conflicts. If a person is aware of specific issues that need healing, they can focus on those while performing the exercise. However, even if the underlying issues remain unknown, the practice remains effective. The intent itself carries energy capable of transcending time and space, fostering reconciliation and harmony.

Taking Spiritual Healing Further

Beyond the initial clearing process, individuals can deepen their spiritual healing by directly addressing the higher self of the person they seek to reconcile with. This involves forming a mental or spiritual connection and offering a heartfelt apology.

A suggested statement for this deeper healing includes: "I want to apologize to you at every moment in time and in every lifetime for any harm I have ever done to you. I deeply regret my actions and the pain they may have caused. Please forgive me."

Engaging in this form of spiritual communication helps dissolve energetic burdens that may have accumulated across different lifetimes. By doing so, individuals not only heal relationships in the present but also on a broader, cosmic level.

The Role of Forgiveness

Forgiveness is a crucial component of spiritual healing. Just as one seeks forgiveness, it is equally important to offer it in return. The process involves acknowledging the possibility that the other person may have also caused harm in this or past lifetimes.

A forgiveness statement may include: "I forgive you at every moment in time and in every lifetime for any harm you have ever done to me. I release all pain, resentment and negative energy associated with this. I forgive you completely."

This reciprocal act of forgiveness not only brings peace to the individuals involved but also contributes to a collective healing within the universe.

Healing Through Divine Connection

Beyond personal relationships, this spiritual practice extends to healing with a higher power—whether referred to as God, Goddess, Source or Universal Energy. By expressing remorse and asking for divine forgiveness, individuals align themselves with higher vibrations of love and unity.

An example of this prayer might be: "God, I want to apologize to you at every moment in time and in every lifetime for any harm I have ever done to [person's name]. Please forgive me for any pain I have caused. I seek your guidance in restoring balance and harmony."

This final step reinforces the interconnectedness of all beings and allows for a deeper sense of peace and wholeness.

A Life-Changing Practice

Many that engage in these spiritual healing exercises report significant personal transformation. They experience increased patience, compassion and a greater sense of love toward others. As the practice grows, so does its impact—spreading healing energy across relationships, communities and even the world.

The simplicity of this method makes it accessible to anyone willing to try. By choosing to approach relationships with love, accountability and forgiveness, individuals contribute to a more peaceful and harmonious existence for all.

Founded in 2024 by certified angelic medium Dominique Lavoisier, Mediumship with Angels, LLC offers remote mediumship and oracle readings to empower clients and bring them peace. For more information, visit MediumshipWithAngels.com.

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New Moon Neuro, the area's only IASIS Micro Current Neurofeedback provider, offers this cutting-edge therapy effective for both adults and children in downtown Chelsea at ALCHEMY Holistic Collective.

Milder, quicker and more affordable than traditional neurofeedback, Micro Current Neurofeedback (MCN) has been proven to be helpful for numerous conditions from ADD, OCD, PTSD, addiction, trauma, insomnia, anxiety, depression, migraines, TBI recovery and many more. Clients with autoimmune disorders, Lyme disease, chronic pain conditions and high blood pressure also observe significant shifts with treatment.

Results are life changing, enduring and supportive of the central nervous system by the way treatments allow the brain to heal itself. The technology is non-invasive, drug-free and approved by the FDA to provide relief from numerous physical, emotional, mental and social health conditions. Clinical studies are available with additional studies underway for MCN's benefit to PTSD, drug recovery, Alzheimer's disease, anxiety and more.

Co-founders of New Moon Neuro and ALCHEMY Holistic Collective, Nicole and Brandon Leffler, are Certified IASIS Providers, bringing their decades of experience in holistic wellness to serve their community. In addition to neurofeedback, they work actively alongside wellness professionals both within the collective and locally to support their client's long-term mental and physical health in all directions. Services at the collective include reiki, sound healing, roXiva audio visual light journeys, and more. New Moon Neuro offers intake with first treatment sessions, with ongoing sessions available in packages. Discounts are available for families, veterans, first responders, medical professionals, teachers and students.

Natural Awakenings *readers can receive $150 off the purchase of a Neurofeedback package. Location: 105 E. Middle St., Chelsea. For more information or to make an appointment, call 734-210-1922, email Hello@NewMoonNeuro.com or visit NewMoonNeuro.com or AlchemyHolisticCollective.com.* *See ad page 11.*

Co-founder Brandon Leffler setting up a Micro Current Neurofeedback session.

Waste Not, Want Not

Benefits of a Circular Economy

by Carrie Jackson

A circular economy mimics nature by keeping products and materials in circulation and regenerating their resources. According to the World Health Organization, it offers an avenue to sustainable growth, good health and decent jobs while saving the environment and its natural resources. Although this is not a new concept, an increasing number of businesses across various industries are acknowledging our climate crisis and renewing their dedication to sustainability.

Consumers, too, are recognizing their role in a circular economy and becoming more mindful of how they use their resources. By making conscious choices about their purchases, managing waste and cutting back on consumption, they can positively impact the planet, their wallets and communities at both a local and global scale.

Understanding Circularity

Claire Potter is the founder of One Circular World, and author of *Welcome to the Circular Economy: The Next Step in Sustainable Living*. She notes that a circular economy

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is best described as a series of systems that work like nature does. "No waste is produced in nature, and everything flows," she says. "Anything not required by one species is used by another or breaks down to provide nutrients for the earth. Nature works in balance with itself, and humans are the only species on Earth that doesn't do that."

A circular economy can provide this balance across multiple sectors. "By using a waste stream of material for another purpose, ensuring that the earth is nourished with organic waste, using materials for as long as possible before they are broken down to be used for another purpose, and ensuring that renewable energies are used to make and transport our products, the circular economy feeds into all elements of our lives," explains Potter.

Consumers can start by cutting down on online shopping, which reduces packaging and prevents unwanted items ending up in landfills. "It is very tempting to click on something and have it arrive the next day, but online shopping is notorious for having excessive amounts of packaging," says Potter. "See if orders can be combined and packed together, or buy the same item from a physical store where you can try things on before purchasing them. Large volumes of clothing purchased online is returned, and, unfortunately, it is cheaper for the brand to ditch the item than to put it back into their supply chain."

Rethinking Conservation Mantras

Although recycling is often touted as a cornerstone of environmental stewardship, Potter asserts, "Recycling won't save us. We have had the 'reduce, reuse, recycle' mantra since around the first Earth Day in 1970, and yet our consumption-based industries have somehow encouraged us to focus on the 'recycling' element alone. In circularity terms, the first two are far higher up the hierarchy of desirable actions. Of course, recycling plays a part, but it is a deeply inefficient system."

As an example, Potter points to the UK where "only around 9 percent of the plastic sent for recycling ever returns as a new item, and the rest ends up being landfilled or incinerated. In some cases, recycled material is exported to developing countries, which increases the risk of it being dumped into various ecosystems."

Potter suggests a revamping of the old mantra to include refuse, repair, redirect, regenerate and refill. "Recycling is often a very energy- and transport-heavy system, so in circularity terms it is far better to reduce and reuse before you get to recycling, which should be the last resort," she explains. "Buy the best possible option for longevity, repairability and upgradability; even if it is more expensive, that initial investment can pay out multiple times."

Responsibly Managing Waste

While it can seem overwhelming to responsibly manage waste, businesses like TerraCycle are stepping in to help by providing Zero Waste Boxes and other waste-management solutions to recycle almost everything—from everyday kitchen waste and cleaning supplies to cosmetics packaging and more. These free and paid solutions are available to individuals, offices, schools and facilities.

Established in 2001, TerraCycle developed its own platform of circularity called Loop. By partnering with retailers (Charlie Banana), brands (Coca-Cola, Evian and Nutella) and supply partners (FedEx), they enable the sale and collection of reusable and returnable versions of conventional, single-use products, making the process convenient and accessible. People can order boxes from the company to fill with obsolete toys, small appliances, water filters, fabric, candy wrappers and other challenging items, and TerraCycle will take care of the rest.

"What makes something locally recyclable depends on whether your local recycling

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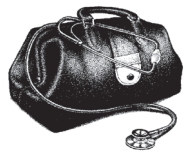

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company can make a profit recycling it," says TerraCycle CEO Tom Szaky. "If the cost of collecting and processing the waste is lower than the value of the resulting raw material, it will likely be locally recyclable. If the costs are higher, then it likely won't be. Our specialty is recycling hard-to-recycle items that would typically go to landfills or incinerators—everything from cigarette butts, to beauty empties, to spent toothpaste tubes."

Going Zero Waste

Circularity has to start with production, says Mary Beth Schaye, a zero-waste consultant and vice president of the Collective Resource Compost Cooperative, in Evanston, Illinois. "When you first design something, you have to think about what's going to happen to it in the end. It's a very cradle-to-grave idea," she points out.

Circularity goes against the current trend of planned obsolescence, a business strategy that encourages consumers to continually buy new products to replace those that become outdated or break down quickly. In contrast, there is a growing interest in a policy known as "extended producer responsibility", which makes manufacturers take responsibility for their products' entire life cycle, including the post-consumer stage.

Schaye can't think of a better way to prevent waste than by simply reducing new purchases. "It can sometimes feel like a burden for consumers to make sure everything goes in the right place," she says. "It's better to not have that thing to get rid of in the first place."

Citing transportation as a barrier, Schaye notes that circularity works best when the circle is smaller. She urges people to look for repurposing solutions within their own communities, suggesting, "If there's something that you are throwing out habitually, like extra food, boxes or containers, see if there's someone else who can benefit from it. We encourage people to identify their own reuse pipelines."

Yuliya Furman from Yuliya Furman/CanvaPro

Reducing Food Waste

Feeding America estimates that people waste 92 billion pounds of food annually in the United States, filling up landfills and taxing the environment. "When food scraps go to landfill, they create methane, which is a greenhouse gas," Schaye attests. "Minimizing methane is more impactful than carbon dioxide on reducing the global temperature."

Composting is an example of circularity that people can understand. "We grow food; we eat the food; and we have food waste that gets composted so that it can enrich the soil to grow more food," Schaye explains. "It's easy and immediate. Most people have an option for composting, but they might not know about it."

A way to reduce food waste is to plan meals ahead of time and avoid over-shopping at the grocery store. "If you know you're going on vacation or will be eating out several times in the next week, then don't buy anything that will expire while you're gone," Schaye counsels. "If you do have extras, see if there's a neighbor or community fridge that can take it. When eating out, try not to order more than you need, but if you think you will have leftovers, then bring your own containers to transport them home."

Produce doesn't have to look perfect in order to be consumed. A bruised peach might make a delicious pie, and overripe bananas are the key ingredient to homemade banana bread. If something is getting close to its expiration date, there may be a way to save it. "If you stock up on apples at the farmers market, make sure you properly store the extras to enjoy later. We've lost the old-school wisdom of how to preserve food. Freezing food and using the right containers can give it new life," says Schaye.

Voting With Our Wallets

Consumers can also become more mindful of supporting institutions that practice circularity. Potter encourages people to look at their bank accounts, investments and pensions. "Often we do not know where our money goes after we deposit it with our bank. We could be trying our best to live as circularly as possible but have no idea that our hard-earned cash is being used to fund fossil fuel companies, for example. Do a bit of digging into where your money goes, and if you don't like the answer, switch your money to an ethical bank investment group," she suggests.

Other changes, such as switching to an energy provider that uses a 100 percent green tariff from renewable energy sources, will have both long- and short-term effects. "Your energy supplier will likely already have a renewable option, so switching might not be too hard and will help to invest in future-proofed systems," says Potter. "If each of us does what we can, our strengths will overlap, eventually creating a beautiful circle of circularity."

Carrie Jackson is a Chicago-based freelance writer and frequent contributor to Natural Awakenings. *Connect at CarrieJacksonWrites.com.*

Revolutionizing Holistic Wellness

with PolarAid's Cutting-Edge Energy Technology

PolarAid is setting a new standard in holistic wellness with its groundbreaking, hand-held energy tool, designed to support overall well-being. The innovative device is lightweight, portable and easy to use, requiring no wires, batteries, charging or apps. Built on long-recognized scientific principles, PolarAid enhances energy flow to promote optimal health and vitality.

Developed using concepts first demonstrated by Nikola Tesla and Dr. Georges Lakhovsky, PolarAid is engineered to harness naturally occurring energy frequencies and redirect them toward the body. This cutting-edge technology supports a wide range of wellness benefits, including joint flexibility, cardiovascular health, metabolic function, mental clarity and improved sleep. Unlike conventional wellness devices, PolarAid requires no maintenance and offers a lifetime of use with proper care.

The Science Behind PolarAid

Tesla, one of history's most influential inventors, identified the presence of cosmic energy in 1899. He observed that this energy sustains all living beings, much like food and water. Over time, however, daily stressors and environmental factors diminish the body's ability to absorb these vital frequencies.

Building upon Tesla's discoveries, Dr. Georges Lakhovsky developed electromagnetic frequency-based technology in the early 20th century. His pioneering work with the 'Lakhovsky antenna' demonstrated how reintroducing natural energy frequencies to biological systems could revitalize and strengthen cells. He successfully experimented with plants and human patients, earning a patent for his device in 1932.

Dr. Dino Tomic's Modern Innovation

Dr. Dino Tomic has taken Tesla's and Lakhovsky's principles to the next level with the development of PolarAid. Using specially designed, copper-based alloy rings arranged in a proprietary configuration, Tomic has created a tool that channels beneficial energy frequencies to restore balance and vitality.

Through years of research and hands-on experience, Tomic has refined a unique protocol for PolarAid users. His comprehensive instruction booklet provides detailed guidance on how to maximize the device's benefits for improved wellness. By working closely with users since 2013, he has fine-tuned the approach to ensure optimal results.

"It is important to recognize that PolarAid is based on long-recognized science and does not require belief in any specific philosophy or modality," says Tomic. "I developed this device to put wellness directly into people's hands, allowing them to take an active role in their health. PolarAid has helped countless individuals worldwide enhance their well-being, and for that, I credit both Tesla and Lakhovsky."

A Simple Experiment to Demonstrate Effectiveness

Tomic encourages users to test PolarAid's impact firsthand. He suggests placing the device under a potted plant for several days and observing the difference in its growth and vibrancy. Another recommended experiment involves placing a glass of water over PolarAid for at least 30 minutes before tasting the difference in clarity and smoothness. These simple demonstrations provide tangible proof of the tool's effectiveness.

PolarAid's ability to support a wide range of wellness goals continues to attract attention from health-conscious individuals seeking natural solutions. With a strong foundation in scientific research and a commitment to holistic health, PolarAid stands as a powerful tool for those looking to optimize their well-being.

For more information or to place an order, call 450-486-7888 or visit PolarAidHealth.com. *See ad page 11.*

Increasing Gut Health

With Prebiotics

by Marlaina Donato

A compromised gut can make us susceptible to a host of conditions, including depression, chronic disease and viruses such as COVID-19. To fortify us against such illnesses and generally strengthen the digestive tract, prebiotic foods like asparagus, dandelion greens, bananas, leeks and Jerusalem artichokes can be quite helpful.

"Prebiotics are like fertilizer for your gut garden, helping it flourish so your whole body can thrive," explains Donna Schwenk, author of *Cultured Food for Life*. "When you consume prebiotics, they pass through the digestive system undigested and become fuel for the friendly bacteria in your colon. This process helps the 'good guys' thrive, increasing their numbers and supporting a healthy balance of gut flora."

Feeding the Good Bacteria

A harmonious mixture of prebiotics and beneficial intestinal flora—known as synbiotics—can help ward off illnesses, lower "bad" cholesterol and reduce chronic gut inflammation, which is linked to the development of tumors and colorectal cancer. A review published last year in the journal *Foods* suggests that adding prebiotics to the diet could improve cognitive function, relieve symptoms associated with inflammatory bowel disease and osteoporosis, and even resolve gastrointestinal disorders that plague up to 70 percent of individuals on the autism spectrum.

Adding healthful prebiotics can be as simple as dropping a few raspberries, blueberries or strawberries into unsweetened yogurt or kefir. Dandelion greens, which are packed with inulin, can be tossed into salads, sautéed with a little garlic and olive oil, or added to smoothies. Leeks, which are mild and sweet, can be enjoyed in soups, sautés, quiches, miso broth or cream dips. Other delicious prebiotic ingredients include bananas, flax and chia seeds, cacao nibs, lentils, oats, barley, chicory and jicama root, almonds, seaweed and avocados.

Schwenk suggests an easy gourmet dish that features roasted asparagus, apples and Jerusalem artichokes over a bed of greens tossed with a probiotic-rich salad dressing. She notes, "Apples are rich in pectin, a soluble fiber and powerful prebiotic that ferments in the gut and feeds beneficial bacteria like *Akkermansia muciniphila*, which play a vital role in maintaining and strengthening the gut lining."

Pros and Cons of Fermented Foods

According to Schwenk, refrigerated kimchi and naturally fermented sauerkraut are rich in *Lactobacillus plantarum*, a powerful probiotic that thrives during fermentation, breaking down sugars and promoting a healthy microbiome. Benefits include nutrient absorption, mood support and enhanced immune function.

Renee Barasch, a certified digestive specialist and owner of Digestive Health Solutions, concurs that these probiotic foods can aid in balancing blood sugar, insulin resistance and digestive woes like constipation, diarrhea, bloating, heartburn, acid reflux and gas. On the other hand, she cautions that fermented ingredients can be too high in histamine and thus cause uncomfortable digestive issues for some people.

"Folks need to keep in mind their unique gut microbiome," says Barasch. "Some people will feel gassier or bloated from some of these foods, depending upon their gut health. I use the BiomeFx stool test to identify the presence of histamine, estrogen, hydrogen sulfide and other things that could cause gut issues."

How To Introduce Prebiotics

Findings published in the *Journal of Advanced Research* in 2020 suggest that certain types of gut flora could play a role in the development of inflammatory bowel diseases. Prebiotics like garlic can become antagonists for those that have an overabundance of certain types of intestinal microbiota. Garlic can also lead to high concentrations of hydrogen sulfide, which can contribute to gut inflammation.

Schwenk advises, "Introducing prebiotic foods gradually is important to avoid stomach discomfort, especially if you're new to them. Prebiotics feed your gut bacteria, which can produce gas as they ferment the fibers, so a slow and steady approach is best."

She recommends eating prebiotics together with probiotics like yogurt, kefir or kimchi so the gut can handle the increase in fiber more effectively. Begin with one or two tablespoons per meal to slowly introduce the beneficial bacteria into the system. "Kimchi and kraut are versatile," Schwenk remarks. "You can enjoy them as a side dish, mix them into fried rice or even stir them into soups after cooking to preserve the live probiotics."

Marlaina Donato is an author, artist and composer. Connect at WildflowersAndWoodSmoke.com.

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Courtesy Donna Schwank

BLUEBERRY BLAST SMOOTHIE

This smoothie is packed with gut-healthy probiotics from kefir and antioxidants from blueberries, making it a powerful tool to support urinary tract health and boost the microbiome. Kefir provides a variety of good bacteria, while blueberries and their juice contain compounds that can help prevent bacterial growth by depriving bacteria like *E. coli* of the iron they need to thrive.

YIELD: 1 SERVING

½ small banana, frozen into chunks
¾ cup kefir
½ cup coconut milk
½ tsp vanilla
1 cup frozen blueberries
1-2 tsp honey

Place all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth. Pour into a glass and enjoy immediately.

Optional: Add a prebiotic powder like Prebio Plus to enhance good bacteria growth. Start with small amounts to avoid discomfort as the gut adjusts.

Recipe and image courtesy of Donna Schwenk.

BLENDER SALSA

This easy-to-prepare salsa is bursting with flavor and health benefits. Tomatoes are an excellent source of the antioxidant lycopene, while garlic and onion are prebiotics. The recipe also calls for a probiotic culture to support gut health with live probiotics. It is a perfect way to introduce cultured foods to hesitant eaters.

YIELD: 1 QUART

6 large ripe tomatoes
2 small onions
2 small, red or green peppers
2 4-oz cans chopped green chilies, with juice
2 cloves garlic
2 tsp paprika
2 tsp ground cinnamon
4 tsp chipotle powder
1 Tbsp raw sugar or Sucanat
⅛ tsp veggie starter culture (or 2 Tbsp kefir whey)
1 tsp Celtic sea salt

Combine all ingredients, except the starter culture, in a blender or food processor until chunky or smooth, depending on preference.

Stir in the veggie starter culture or kefir whey, making sure it is well incorporated.

Transfer the salsa to jars, seal with a secure lid and ferment at room temperature. After two days, store in the refrigerator and enjoy.

Recipe and image courtesy of Donna Schwenk.

Courtesy Donna Schwank

Courtesy Donna Schwank

APPLE KEFIR SALAD DRESSING

Turn any salad into a probiotic powerhouse with this creamy, tangy dressing.

YIELD: 2 SERVINGS

½ cup kefir cheese (see below)
2 tsp garlic powder
2 tsp onion powder
2 Tbsp kombucha or apple cider vinegar
2 Tbsp apple juice
½ Tbsp honey

To make kefir cheese, strain 2 cups of kefir through a fine-mesh strainer lined with cheesecloth or a nut milk bag over a bowl. Let it strain in the refrigerator for 12 to 24 hours until thickened, then transfer the cheese to a container and store for up to three weeks. The liquid whey can be saved for smoothies, soups or fermenting.

Whisk all ingredients together in a small bowl until smooth. Serve immediately or refrigerate for up to 3 weeks.

Recipe and image courtesy of Donna Schwenk.

KEFIR KRAUT DIP

Loaded with billions of probiotics, this dip is perfect for any occasion. It's quick to make and perfect with sprouted chips or fresh veggies.

YIELD: 6 SERVINGS

½ cup sauerkraut, drained (or kimchi)
1 cup kefir cheese (see below)

Optional Toppings

1 tsp black pepper
1 Tbsp toasted sesame seeds
1 Tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

To make kefir cheese, strain 2 cups of kefir through a fine-mesh strainer lined with cheesecloth or a nut milk bag over a bowl. Let it strain in the refrigerator for 12 to 24 hours until thickened, then transfer the cheese to a container and store for up to three weeks. The liquid whey can be saved for smoothies, soups or fermenting.

Mix the sauerkraut and kefir cheese in a bowl until well combined. Add black pepper, sesame seeds or parsley, if desired.

Recipe and image courtesy of Donna Schwenk.

Moving More

The Path to Greater Health and Energy

by Zak Logan

The thought that a few extra minutes of movement each day could transform our health, energy and happiness is the motivation behind the American Heart Association (AHA) promotion of April as Move More Month. For avid fitness enthusiasts, as well as those looking to take the first step toward an active lifestyle, this is the time to celebrate movement in all its forms.

Physical inactivity has become a creeping health crisis. According to guidelines published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, nearly 80 percent of adults fail to meet the recommended levels of aerobic and muscle-strengthening activity. The AHA reports that cardiovascular and heart disease affects nearly half of all American adults, causing direct and indirect costs that are projected to reach $1.1 trillion by 2035, according to RTI International, a nonprofit research institute.

The Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health reports that a healthy lifestyle, which includes regular exercise, may prevent 80 percent of sudden heart attacks and cases of coronary artery disease, as well as 50 percent of strokes caused by blood clots. The health benefits are reason enough to hit the gym or

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go out for a morning jog. Move More Month inspires us to incorporate movement into a busy life and, most importantly, find joy in an active lifestyle.

Exercise Options

There is no one-size-fits-all formula for fitness, and Move More Month is an opportunity to explore the options that best match our personality, lifestyle and fitness level.

- **Fitness boot camps** are high-energy workouts in an energizing environment that welcomes beginners and experienced fitness lovers alike. Accept the challenge with a local trainer, at a CrossFit gym or with the guidance of an app like BurnFit.
- **Dance classes** such as Zumba, salsa or hip-hop can be fun and immersive workouts that don't feel like exercise at all.
- **Yoga in the park** combines mindfulness with a great stretch and a dose of natural vitamin D. Many communities offer free sessions.
- **Water sports** like kayaking and paddleboarding develop balance, core strength and endurance while communing with nature.
- **Social sports,** including golf, pickleball and tennis, not only burn calories but also offer camaraderie and fun.
- **Daily walks** are the cornerstone of an active lifestyle. Try to reach 10,000 steps with walks around the neighborhood or local park, remembering to compound the benefits by using this time outdoors to calm the mind and invigorate the spirit.
- **Team sports** like soccer, basketball or softball offer wonderful workouts combined with competitive team play at local parks or sports clubs.

Breaking Sedentary Habits

Making the shift from a sedentary lifestyle can feel daunting, but every huge transformation starts with a single step. Try these practical tips to ease into an active lifestyle.

- **Set achievable goals.** Start with 10 minutes of movement a day and gradually extend the time.
- **Integrate movement throughout the day.** Stretch while watching TV, park the car farther from work or stores to take extra steps, or choose the stairs instead of the elevator whenever practical.
- **Use technology.** Fitness trackers by Fitbit, Apple, Samsung and Garmin help monitor progress, set challenges and offer that extra motivational nudge.
- **Applaud everyday wins.** Even tiny changes matter. Try a new dance move each day. Stretch in the mornings or set reminders to get up and move during long work hours.
- **Avoid perfectionism.** What matters is consistency. All movement is progress, so celebrate it.

The Power of Community

We often think of exercise as a solo endeavor, but getting others involved can be a great tool for staying motivated. Local communities are brimming with opportunities to connect with others, offering interactive activities such as running clubs, group fitness classes, sports leagues and cycling tours. Many neighborhoods have online groups or bulletin boards that promote meetups, classes and fitness events.

Move More Today

Movement isn't just about physical health; it's about the joy of discovering what the body can do, the pride in building a healthier routine and the sense of belonging to a group of like-minded individuals. Don't wait for tomorrow to get started. Lace up, stretch out and start moving today.

Zak Logan is a freelance health writer dedicated to getting back to basics.

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Treating Urinary Infections in Cats

How Diet, Hydration and Supplements Can Help

by Ruth Roberts, DVM, CVA, CVH, CVFT, NAN

A healthy urinary system in cats depends on a balanced diet to prevent issues like feline lower urinary tract disease (FLUTD), which affects the urethra and bladder of cats, creating major health risks and causing discomfort. Affected cats may scream in pain, pass very tiny amounts or strain to urinate. Some start urinating outside the litter box, usually on cool places like bathtubs or tile floors, or have blood in their urine.

Poor food choices, especially dry food, can disrupt urinary function, leading to pain, frequent urination and dangerous blockages. The right diet can help manage inflammation, support the bladder and speed up recovery, so proper food selection is needed for prevention and healing.

A study in the *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery* noted that FLUTD can lead to painful urination and blockages caused by struvite crystals that become wedged within the urethra. Researchers suggested that dry food can worsen the condition because the lower intake of water causes urine to be more concentrated, thereby increasing the risk of crystal formation.

Homemade Diet for Urinary Health

"Commercial dry cat food frequently lacks the necessary moisture and contains preservatives, fillers and incomplete nutrients," says Marketa Jefferson, a holistic pet health coach. "A moisture-rich diet, such as homemade or raw food, is essential for preventing dehydration and reducing the risk of urinary issues like urinary blockages and FLUTD, as cats have a naturally low thirst drive."

She recommends a diet with high-quality, species-appropriate ingredients tailored to support a cat's urinary health. "A homemade diet gives pet owners full control over what goes into their cat's food, ensuring it is fresh, balanced and free from unnecessary additives," she explains. "Proper hydration is one of the most important factors in maintaining a healthy urinary system, and fresh food provides much-needed moisture that kibble lacks."

Best Ingredients for FLUTD

"Urinary diets for cats should include high-quality animal proteins, such as deboned meat and organ meats, along with essential fatty acids like fish oil," says Jefferson. "Adding the right vitamins and minerals is crucial, and small amounts of vegetables can also be beneficial."

It may take some time and patience to convince cats that are used to eating kibble to switch to a homemade FLUTD diet. "In my experience with three cats, they all eventually switched to homemade food and love it now, but one of them took over a month to fully adapt," Jefferson points out, adding that one of her cats lost five pounds after switching to a healthier homemade diet, which was a huge health improvement.

Natural Remedies for Urinary Support

Certain natural supplements can be beneficial for feline urinary health. "Rather than relying on antibiotics for urinary tract infections, I use natural remedies to support bladder health, as well as PEA [palmitoylethanolamide], a medicine that can ease discomfort and support the urinary tract," says Jefferson. "Chinese herbs can help maintain kidney and bladder function, while cranberry extract may prevent bacteria from adhering to the urinary tract. Marshmallow root is another excellent remedy because it has anti-inflammatory properties and helps soothe bladder irritation, while vitamin C supports immune function and omega-3 fatty acids help reduce inflammation."

Tips for Preventing FLUTD in Cats

Jefferson emphasizes that prevention starts with proper hydration and environmental management. "Eating moisture-rich FLUTD cat food is crucial for staying hydrated and flushing bacteria from the body. Keeping several water bowls around the house or using a water fountain can encourage drinking," she explains.

Additionally, maintaining a clean litter box is essential because it promotes proper usage and allows for better urinary health monitoring. "I personally use Pretty Litter because its crystals change color in response to urine acidity and alkalinity, providing an early indication of potential health issues," Jefferson points out.

"Minimizing household stressors can also greatly support both urinary and overall well-being," says Jefferson. "Mental stimulation is just as important—interactive toys, scratching posts and enrichment activities help keep cats engaged and active, reducing stress levels."

Jefferson also points out the importance of monitoring urine acidity, noting, "Keeping an eye on your cat's urine pH is crucial, especially if they are prone to urinary issues. The ideal range is between 6.5 and 7. If it reaches 8 or higher, that may signal an infection or underlying issue that needs veterinary attention."

Ruth Roberts is an integrative veterinarian and holistic health coach for pets, as well as the creator of The Original CrockPet Diet. Learn more at DrRuthRoberts.com.

THURSDAY, APRIL 3

University of Michigan Jazz Showcase – 8pm. With Special Guest Kenny Barron. $15, Students $5/students with ID. The Ark, 316 S Main St, Ann Arbor. TheArk.org.

SATURDAY, APRIL 5

Williamston Pop-Up Art & Craft Show – 11am-6pm. An eclectic mix of artisans, mediums and items for sale. Everything from watercolors to scratchboard, to chocolate and beard products. Free admission. Keller's Plaza, 100 E Grand River Ave, Williamston. Tinyurl.com/5n7hbc2d.

Drum and Dance Jam – 7:30-9pm. Bring a drum with you or use a drum that is provided. $5 donation requested at the door. Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth, 704 Airport Blvd, Ann Arbor. For more info: 734-327-0270, InterfaithSpirit.org or Facebook.com/glattercurtisav1972.

The RFD Boys – 8pm. Legends of Michigan bluegrass. $16. The Ark, 316 S Main St, Ann Arbor. TheArk.org.

MONDAY, APRIL 7

Peaceful Dragon Rising Qigong Stretches – 6-7pm. Learn 15 qigong (energy work) stretches from head to toe. Designed by Master Wasentha Young, this easy to learn routine helps to loosen joints and relax muscles from head to toes. $20. Peaceful Dragon School, 1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0695. PeacefulDragonSchool.com.

TUESDAY, APRIL 8

Ann Arbor Backyard Beekeepers: Queens – 6:30-8:30pm. With David Burns. This session will focus on evaluating a queen, managing queen cells and introducing a new queen. Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N Dixboro Rd, Ann Arbor. mbgna.umich.edu.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9

Open Stage Showcase – 8pm. Featuring Brooke Bowker, Patrick Clinton and Michael Shelata. $10, $5/students & Ark members. The Ark, 316 S Main St, Ann Arbor. TheArk.org.

THURSDAY, APRIL 10

Tai Chi or Chi Kung Early Bird Discount – Peaceful Dragon School registration for the Spring/Summer semester (Apr 28-July 28) is now open. Register by Apr 10 and get a $10 discount. Use code ss2025. Adults $215 before discount. Peaceful Dragon School, 1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0695. PeacefulDragonSchool.com.

FRIDAY, APRIL 11

Vernal Pool Patrol Training – 4-6pm. A training on how to collect survey information for a vernal pool. This will include identifying vernal pool indicator species, soil and habitat types. Iron Creek Preserve, 11703 Noggles Rd, Manchester. LegacyLandConservancy.org.

SATURDAY, APRIL 12

Dexter Winter Farmers Market – 9am-1pm. Features art and crafts, bread and baked goods, jewelry, fresh produce, eggs, cheese, meats and more. Huron River Methodist Church, 7643 Huron River Dr, Dexter. DexterMarket.com.

Workday at Beckwith Preserve – 10am-12pm. Help remove invasive species garlic mustard. Beckwith Nature Preserve, 2792 Morton Rd (M-106), Stockbridge. LegacyLandConservancy.org.

SUNDAY, APRIL 13

Release & Renew: A Sound Bath Experience – 6-7:30pm. Join Martina Smith for a rejuvenating and immersive experience of deep breathing, meditation and a relaxing sound massage. $20/Zoom, $30/advance, $40/at the door. Enlightened Soul Center & Shop, 2711 Carpenter Rd, Ann Arbor. 734-358-0218. EnlightenedSoulCenter.com.

FRIDAY, APRIL 18

Fireside Fun – 6:30-8:30pm. There's nothing quite as relaxing as sitting around a campfire, roasting marshmallows and swapping stories. Free. Leslie Science & Nature Center, 1831 Traver Rd, Ann Arbor. DiscoverScienceAndNature.org.

SATURDAY, APRIL 19

Spring Eggstravaganza – 10am-12:30pm. Investigate the many animals that lay eggs. Hit the trails in search of clues, meet wildlife up close in the Critter House, create a craft and more. $7/person, free/under age 2.

Cannabliss Day Retreat – 11am-3pm. Indulge in a harmonious blend of wellness practices and the natural allure of cannabis in a welcoming, safe environment designed for relaxation and inspiration. Whether you choose to partake in consumption or simply bask in the serene ambiance, all are welcome to join this transformative experience. $115. Key Massage & Wellness, 3937 E Willis Rd, Milan. Tinyurl.com/8unethw9.

TUESDAY, APRIL 22

Earth Day at The Arb – 10am-5pm. Drop-in for guided activities and nature experiences. Guided activities start every hour. Free. Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N Dixboro Rd, Ann Arbor. mbgna.umich.edu.

Natural Habitat Restoration Event – 4-6pm. This volunteer opportunity offers students, young adults and community members a chance to engage directly with the land and learn restoration techniques that support local ecosystems. University of Michigan Natural Habitat Restoration, Ann Arbor. Location provided upon registration: 646-248-5981 or Adamah.org.

Artist Spotlight: Hayley Reardon – 8pm. A critically acclaimed folk-pop singer and songwriter, and a storyteller in the truest sense of the word. Free; please bring a nonperishable food donation for Food Gatherers. The Ark, 316 S Main St, Ann Arbor. TheArk.org.

FRIDAY, APRIL 25

Building Bridges – 5-6:30pm. Sale features wearable art and other art creations. Sponsored by Art on a Journey Studio/Gallery. Free admission. Ypsilanti Farmer Marketplace, 16 S Washington St, Ypsilanti.

SATURDAY, APRIL 26

River Roundup – 9am-5pm. Meet your team onsite at the first of 2 sampling locations. At each site, search through stones, leaves and sediment to find bugs in their natural habitat. Each team includes an experienced volunteer who has been trained in sample collection. Only trained volunteers go in the water to collect the samples. Huron River Watershed Council, 117 N 1st St, Ste 100, Ann Arbor. 734-769-5123. Registration required: hrwc.org/volunteer/roundup.

Workday at Sharon Hills Preserve – 10am-12pm. Volunteers will help remove invasive species garlic mustard. Sharon Hills Preserve, Sharon Hollow Rd, Sharon. LegacyLandConservancy.org.

Plant and Mushroom Walk – 12-2pm, Wildwood Preserve Metropark; 4-6pm, Crosswinds Marsh. Learning opportunity for those with beginning to intermediate foraging skills, and for anyone wishing to increase their knowledge of the local flora. $25. Details: WillForageForFood.com.

SUNDAY, APRIL 27

Ann Arbor Earth Day Festival 2025 – 1-4:30pm. A free, annual citywide celebration featuring live music, exhibitors from local organizations, and information about how you can help our planet. Leslie Science & Nature Center, 1831 Traver Rd, Ann Arbor. DiscoverScienceAndNature.org.

Release & Renew: A Sound Bath Experience – 6:30-7:30pm. Join Martina Smith for a rejuvenating and immersive experience of deep breathing, meditation and a relaxing sound massage. $20/Zoom, $30/advance, $40/at the door. Enlightened Soul Center & Shop, 2711 Carpenter Rd, Ann Arbor. 734-358-0218. EnlightenedSoulCenter.com.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30

Light Therapy for Brain Health – 6:30-8pm. Light therapy (photobiomodulation) is a safe, effective and research-based modality proven to increase circulation and decrease pain/inflammation. With Paula Neys, CLT. Free. Northville District Library, 212 W Cady St, Northville. NorthvilleLibrary.org.

Open Stage – 8pm. Take your music to the masses. Open Stage nights offer supportive audiences and a terrific space. Performers have 8 mins (or 2 songs) each to do their thing. $3, free/members, students. The Ark, 316 S Main St, Ann Arbor. TheArk.org.

PLAN AHEAD

SUNDAY, MAY 4

Smokin' Spells Workshop – 2-4pm. This unique workshop blends community, creativity and intention-setting in a sacred space. An empowering journey of creativity, self-expression and discovery. Each participant receives a custom spell kit to take home, extending the magic beyond the day. $35. Key Massage & Wellness, 3937 E Willis Rd, Milan. Tinyurl.com/8unethw9.

MONDAY, MAY 5

Pearls of Wisdom – 1st Mon, May 5-Aug 4. A transformative monthly series designed to promote emotional, spiritual and collective stability. Peaceful Dragon School, 1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0695. PeacefulDragonSchool.com.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 9

2025 Summer Community Supported Agriculture – July 9-Sept 24. Offer full and half shares. Complete an online form to receive an agreement and total pricing details. Enrollment is open until shares are filled. Jacob's Fresh Farm, 475 N Fletcher Rd, Dexter. 517-250-1222. JacobsFreshFarm.com.

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DAILY

Ayurveda For Us – Provides online consultations, where clients receive personalized guidance to address chronic health issues and reclaim their vitality. With a focus on diet, herbalism, mental and spiritual healing and lifestyle adjustments, Ayurveda offers a holistic approach to wellness. To schedule a free 30-min discovery call: Calendly.com/d/4dc-gws-6fw/discovery-call. For more info & appt: AyurvedaFor.us.

Herbs for the Southeast Michigan Garden – Learn how to grow and use 20 culinary and medicinal herbs suited for the southeast Michigan garden. Will cover preservation techniques, basic medicine making and crafting herbal oils, poultices, infused honeys and vinegars plus more. Free. More info & register: Castle Remedies.podia.com.

Introduction to Homeopathy Class – Learn how to choose remedies and how to use them. Class contains nearly 4 hrs of pre-recorded videos. Downloadable resources. $75. More info & register: Castle Remedies.podia.com.

Oracle Readings – With Dominique Lavoisier, owner of Mediumship with Angels LLC. Incorporates higher-dimensional energies to offer additional insights and support. Florida-based; all readings done remotely. For appt or more info: MediumshipWithAngels.com.

Holistic Health Consultation – 9am-7pm. Online or phone consultation consultations take about 1 hr and are provided by Certified Xolar Vibronics Holistic Educator and Life Coach Ikaro Phoenix. Be introduced to various techniques, elements or holistic ways of viewing the situation which help the soul to be reeducated and empowered to deal with problems and eliminate them from their root. $150. For appt: LivingWisdomCoaching.earth.

Pets & Parents Reiki Session – 9am-9pm. Sessions for wellness, critical care and end-of-life transition. Actively experience the use of reiki touch with your pet. Learn additional tips for helping your pet. Virtual 40-min appt. $20. 231-590-0001. TCDesoto @gmail.com.

The Best Affirmation for You – 10am. Learn about the power of affirmations and how they can bring about positive events and circumstances. Call for a 10-15-min consultation with a licensed professional counselor to pick the best affirmation for you. Purchase an affirmation stone to enhance what you are affirming in your life by having a visible reminder. Free. 734-644-6943. Harmony2c.com/affirmation-stones.

Tiny Lions Lounge & Adoption Center (TLC) – 12-7pm, Wed-Sun. Offers feline-friendly activities with kittens and cats available to take home. 5245 Jackson Rd, Ste A1, 734-661-3575. TinyLions.org.

Naturally Purifying and Supercharging Your Body Podcast – 7-7:45pm. Matthew Hazen is the owner of Human Consciousness Support, a company that produces a unique nutraceutical product called MasterPeace. Free. BuzzSprout.com/1206776/14236700.

WEEKLY

Yoga with Crysterra Wellness – Variety of classes Tues-Thurs. Cost varies. For schedule & details: CrysterraWellness.com.

Stop Sabotaging Your Self-Care – Christy DeBurton will guide you on a journey of self-discovery to examine the obstacles that stand in the way of you taking better care of yourself. 4-wk self-paced online course. $79 (regular $149). Yoga Room, 889 Honey Creek Dr, Ann Arbor. Info@ChristyDebBurton.com. YogaRoomAnnArbor.com/online-courses-self-care.

SUNDAYS

Bach Flower Remedies Level 1 Live Web – 3rd Sun. Learn how to use the 38 Bach flower remedies to help yourself and others conquer fear, worry, overwhelm, low self-esteem, lack of focus, poor concentration, trouble sleeping and more. With Nancy Buono, BFCP, Director of Bach Flower Education. BachFlowerSchool.com.

Hudson Valley Humane Society Rescue Reading – 10am-12pm. Includes humane education lessons, group read-aloud and dog meet-and-greet. Drop-off event. $10; space limited. HSHV.org/RescueReading.

Online Meditation from Anywhere – 11am-12pm. Building an international sangha by connecting loving hearts. Donations welcome. To receive a link: CelesteZygmont2@yahoo.com or DeepSpring.org.

Sunday Talk with Demo Rinpoche – 11am-12pm. Jewel Heart Tibetan Buddhist Learning Center, 1129 Oak Valley Dr, Ann Arbor. 734-994-3387. JewelHeart.org.

Common Cycle Bike Repair Sessions – 11am-3pm. Learn about bike repair, share tools and build a sense of community. Volunteers ready to assist with maintenance issues or personal projects. 416 W Huron St, Ste 11, Ann Arbor. 734-619-0907. CommonCycle.org.

Critter House Open Hours – 12-3pm. A great way to get up close and personal with some fascinating animals, all while developing an appreciation for the incredible diversity of the natural world. Suggested donation: $5/person, $20/family. Leslie Science & Nature Center, 1831 Traver Rd, Ann Arbor. DiscoverScienceAndNature.org.

Inspiring Talk by Mata Yogananda – 7pm. Spiritual talk, pure meditation and silent prayer, with Winged Prayer for all in need at 9pm. Free. Self-Realization Meditation Healing Centre, 7187 Drumheller, Bath. 517-641-6201. SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org.

MONDAYS

Weekday Morning Online Meditation – Mon-Fri. 7:30-8am. Insight Meditation Ann Arbor offers a 30-min online group sitting via Zoom. Free; donations gratefully accepted. InsightMeditationAnnArbor.org.

Beginner Tai Chi – 10-11:15am. A series of postures linked together in a fluid manner. Focuses on relaxation in motion, balance and the mind/body connection. Can attend one or both sessions per week (Mon morning &/or Thurs evening). $195. Peaceful Dragon School, 1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0695. PeacefulDragonSchool.com.

Mindful Dexter – 12-12:30pm. Last Mon. A short 30-min guided meditation that is a simple and practical mindfulness tune-up that you can access from wherever you are. Zoom. Tinyurl.com/mindfuldexter.

Soul Power Mystic Arts – 5pm. 2nd Mon & Wed. Re-claim the real you, hear your evolutionary calling and cultivate the nature mystic within through 4 retreats, individual training, self-acceptance process, nature qigong, plant ally ceremonies and body-ecology psychology. Sliding scale. Mother Bear Sanctuary, 20470 Barton, Pinckney. 734-796-6690. MotherBearSanctuary.com.

Meaningful Mondays – 8pm. SevaLight Retreat Centre warmly welcomes everyone, of all faiths, meditation practices and traditions, to join us virtually. Will gather on video conference sharing in song/chants and inspiring readings from Mata Yogananda Mahasaya Dharmaji's writings, followed by Pure Meditation and silent prayer. Free. Email by 10am any Mon to receive the info about how to join by video: Info@SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org.

TUESDAYS

Senior Discount Tuesdays: Castle Remedies – Customers over the age of 65 can receive a 10% discount on their in-store purchases. In the Parkway Center, 2345 S Huron Pkwy, Ann Arbor. 734-973-8990. CastleRemedies.com.

Online Meditation from Anywhere – 9-9:30am. Building an international sangha by connecting loving hearts. Donations welcome. To receive a link: CelesteZygmont2@yahoo.com or DeepSpring.org.

WEDNESDAYS

Get the Most from Your DNA Test – 6-8pm. Learn what you can do with your results and what additional opportunities are available for discovering your genetic genealogy. Understand the science, how to find information and how to share that information. Course 39651. $59. Washtenaw Community College, 4800 E Huron River Dr, Ann Arbor. 734-677-5060. wccnet.edu/noncredit.

THURSDAYS

Move With Us: Trager Mentastics – Thru May 1. 10-10:45am. 1st Thurs. This is a gentle form of movement that is low key, focused on the nervous system releasing restrictive patterns. $12 cash. Ann Arbor School of Massage, Herbal and Natural Medicine, 3684 W Liberty Rd, Ann Arbor. RSVP: 734-769-7794. NaturopathicSchoolOfAnnArbor.net.

Class Observation – 11-11:30am. Also Fri. Ann Arbor School of Massage, Herbal and Natural Medicine, 3684 W Liberty Rd, Ann Arbor. RSVP: 734-769-7794. NaturopathicSchoolOfAnnArbor.net.

Qigong: Basics – 11:15am-12:15pm. Class introduces participants to basic self-care stretches, breathing, meditations and self-acupressure for reducing muscle tension, increasing mindfulness, and revitalization. $180. Peaceful Dragon School, 1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0695. PeacefulDragonSchool.com.

Beginner Tai Chi – 6-7:15pm. A series of postures linked together in fluid manner. Focuses on relaxation in motion, balance and the mind/body connection. Can attend one or both sessions per week (Mon morning &/or Thurs evening). $195. Peaceful Dragon School, 1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0695. PeacefulDragonSchool.com.

Thursday Hills of Ann Arbor – 6:30pm. We ride some of the best hills A2 has to offer. A/B/C: 10-40 miles. Start at Wheels in Motion, 3402 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor. WheelsInMotion.us.

Thursday Evening Silent Meditation – 6:30-8:15pm. With Insight Meditation Ann Arbor. Free; donations gratefully accepted. Zion Lutheran Church, 1501 W Liberty St, Ann Arbor. 734-994-4455. InsightMeditationAnnArbor.org.

Mindful Dexter – 7:30-8pm. 3rd Thurs. A short 30-min guided meditation that is a simple and practical mid-month mindfulness tune-up that you can access from wherever you are. Zoom. Tinyurl.com/mindfuldexter.

FRIDAYS

Natural Turmeric Indian Wedding Facial for All – 9am-6pm. Design combines traditional ingredients like turmeric, used in Indian weddings for skin beautification, with modern machines that enhance the overall experience. Mahabir Wellness, 1640 Haslett Rd, Ste 100, Haslett. 517-325-9954. MahabirWellness.com.

TMJ Massage Demo on Jaw – 10-10:30am. 1st Fri. Patti Stephen, LMT and long-term dental professional, will offer 2 demos for guests and students to observe on resolving and approaching TMJ tension. Free. Ann Arbor School of Massage, Herbal & Natural Medicine, 3684 W Liberty Rd, Ann Arbor. RSVP: 734-769-7794. NaturopathicSchoolOfAnnArbor.net.

Online: Prayer Power Hour – 12-12:30pm. Prayer changes things. Our goal is simple: to love you, pray for you and introduce you to our loving Creator, the Great Healer. Free. Tinyurl.com/PrayerPowerHour.

SATURDAYS

Mindful Dexter – 9:30-10:30am. 2nd Sat. Includes a 25-30-min guided meditation, a few minutes of silent meditation, followed by time for comments/questions and a discussion on a mindfulness topic. Dexter Library, 3255 Alpine St, Dexter. 734-476-8474. Tinyurl.com/mindfuldexter.

Pregnancy, Childbirth, Postpartum and Baby Classes – 6-7pm. Classes are held virtually online led by our top AID instructors utilizing state of the art visual aids and activities to keep it fun and engaging while presenting the latest evidenced based material on each topic. $35/class. Childbirth-Classes.com.

Liberate yourself from suffering.

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Clinically certified aromatherapist offers holistic consultations with customized blends of professional quality essential oils. Trust Margo to help you understand the complicated world of aromatherapy. Her holistic approach can help you maximize your benefits from this powerful therapy and minimize side effects. Aromatherapy is a wonderful way to integrate natural healing into your life. Phone consultations are available.

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Dr. W. K. Dobracki, DDS
606 W Stadium Blvd, Ann Arbor, 48103
734-747-6400
DrDobracki@AnnArborsDentist.com
AnnArborsDentist.com

Passionate about holistic care while utilizing Bio-Compatible materials and lasers. Our patients can elect to be free from fluoride, mercury and other harmful metals. Filling materials are tooth colored and both BPA & Bis-GMA free. We offer natural oral health products using fine essential oils, and free of gluten and preservatives. *See ad page 3.*

Education

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Take the next step toward a career that makes a difference! Discover Your Future in Natural Product Sciences with our flexible graduate programs. Choose from a 30-credit online Master's degree or a 12-credit graduate certificate, both designed to fit your life and goals. Specialize in medical cannabis or nutraceuticals, and prepare for exciting roles in healthcare, pharmacy, research and development, manufacturing, business and beyond. *See ad page 29.*

Energy Enhancement & Wellness

MIRACULOUS ENERGIES
(A Private Membership Association)
MiraculousEnergiesAssociation@gmail.com
517-599-4949
MiraculousEnergies.com

Miraculous Energies
Energy Lounge

The EESystem combines Body, Mind, Spirit and Science. This system generates multiple bio-active life-enhancing energy fields, including scalar waves and a morphogenic energy field, also known as scalar vortex. When combined with light as biophotons, it can interface with the body's DNA matrix and promote wellness. *See ad on inside front cover*

Health Food Store

BETTER HEALTH MARKET & CAFE
3500 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor
734-975-6613
BetterHealthMarket.com

Better Health

Michigan's #1 source for organic foods, vitamins and more. Better nutrition at better prices, all backed by better advice from our nutrition experts. You will find; organic produce, all the top-quality vitamins and supplement brands, sports nutrition and proteins, delicious prepared foods, desserts, an organic salads, soup and hot bar, natural bath, body and aromatherapy products, green home products. Get rewards through our APP. *See ad page 19..*

Holistic Doctor

DR. MALCOLM SICKELS, M.D.
210 Little Lake Dr, Ste 10, Ann Arbor
734-332-9936
DrSickels.com

Malcolm Sickels earned his M.D. from the University of Michigan, where he taught fellow medical students about different approaches to health. Board certified in Family Medicine and Holistic Medicine, he is in solo practice on the west side of Ann Arbor. Learn more at Dr. Sickels.com. *See ads, pages 10 and 15.*

Holistic Mental Wellness

CENTER FOR INTEGRATIVE COUNSELING
Karen Kerr, LMSW
2010 Hogback Road, Ste. 6E, Ann Arbor
734-660-5610
Karen8Kerr@gmail.com
KarenPKerr.com

In offering a caring, collaborative and supportive experience, I draw upon a holistic approach with a rich variety of practices designed to deepen awareness, uplift mood, manage stress and develop a stronger sense of self-worth, purpose, connection and joy in life.

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734-973-8990
CastleRemedies.com

Castle Remedies

Serving Michigan for nearly 40 years. Castle Remedies offers over 1,000 homeopathic remedies as well as herbs, essential oils, flower essences, books, unique gifts and jewelry. We carry top-tier nuitional supplement brands such as Metagenics, Ortho Molecular, Xymogen, Integrative Therapeutics, Karuna, NOW, and more. Classes available online. *See ad page 23.*

Mobile Holistic Veterinary Services

WHOLE LIFE VETERINARY SERVICES
WholeLifeVet@gmail.com
517-474-4050
WholeLifeVeterinary.com

WHOLE LIFE
VETERINARY SERVICES

Give your horse or pet the benefit of both worlds with a combination of Western medical knowledge and Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine and acupuncture in the comfort of your own home or barn. We are committed to providing you with the best holistic pet health. We provide holistic care, in-home euthanasia, and equine lameness care. *See ad page 25.*

Mold Testing & Remediation

MOLDPRO
John Du Bois, CMI, CMR, CCMI
247 W. Main Street, Milan
734-439-8800 · MoldProllc.com

MoldPro offers chemical-free mold remediation, independent certified mold testing, inspection and consultation services all over SE Michigan specializing in mold biotoxin illness clients.

Nature-Oriented Meeting Space

MICHIGAN FRIENDS CENTER AT FRIENDS LAKE COMMUNITY
7748 Clark Lake Road, Chelsea
734-475-1892
MFCenter.org/rent

We offer the holistic community a nature-oriented meeting space for workshops, meetings, counseling, yoga, youth groups and family gatherings. Main room accommodates 100, with two smaller classrooms and kitchen facilities. Hiking trails. Weekend rates range from $200-$400, additional for extensive grounds use, camping. *See ad page 15.*

Neurofeedback

NEW MOON NEURO
105 E. Middle Street, Chelsea
734-210-1922
NewMoonNeuro.com

new moon neuro

Located within ALCHEMY Holistic Collective, New Moon Neuro is the area's only IASIS Micro Current Neurofeedback Provider. Find lasting support for anxiety, depression, ADHD, insomnia, OCD, addiction, TBI, migraines, pain issues and more - for the entire family! *Natural Awakenings* readers can receive $150 off the purchase of a Neurofeedback package. *See ad page 11.*

Smoking Cessation

FREE AT LAST! HYPNOSIS
Center - A Joyful Journey
734-883-8775

Stop smoking in one visit. Afraid it's going to be too painful or too difficult? Our unique specialized and proven system makes it easy. Become a happy and permanent non-smoker today. *See ad page 27.*

Weight Loss

FREE AT LAST! HYPNOSIS
CENTER - A JOYFUL JOURNEY
734-883-8775

Lose weight now with hypnosis. Achieve permanent positive life and habit changes through our safe, rapid and effective system. Tap the potential of your mind to create the health and vitality you've always wanted. *See ad page 27.*

Wellness Centers

CRYSTERRA WELLNESS
3173 Baker Rd, Dexter
734-649-1849
CrysterraWellness.com

Crysterra Wellness
ancient inspirations
modern well-being
Reflexology-Reiki-Lithotherapy-Yoga

Ancient inspirations for modern well-being. Supporting you and your wellness journey every step of the way with reflexology, reiki, lithography and yoga.

THRIVE! WELLNESS CENTER
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734-470-6766
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thrive! Wellness Center

Shannon Roznay, DC, specializes in Nutrition Response Testing and Activator Chiropractic. Thrive! also carries natural foods, skin and home products. *See ad page 22.*

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